

The Brave of Heart

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Summary: The story of how two people discovered they had more in common than they thought. JamesXLily. Marauder era.

The Brave of Heart

Important notes at the end, please read.

****Fall- Year Three****

****Gryffindor Common room****

****Lily****

The centaur has a human head, torso, and arms joined to a horse's body which may be-

"Teehee!"

The high-pitched giggle made Lily wince and cut through her focus like a knife. She closed her eyes momentarily before returning to the text.

-which may be any of several colors. Being intelligent and capable of speech-

"Teehee!"

Lily narrowed her eyes, trying to stay focused. But before Lily could finish the sentence...

"Teehee!"

With an annoyed huff, Lily finally looked up from her textbook. Carefully, the red-head bookmarked her spot and gently closed the book.

Lily turned her head to Rosalin, trying not to purse her lips in disapproval. "Alright, which one are you looking at this time?"

Rosalin was a fellow third-year Gryffindor with curly, mousy brown hair and eyes the color of sapphires. She was seated beside Lily near the common room fireplace, her textbook open on her lap, still open to the same page she was reading twenty minutes ago.

Rosalin's gaze was drawn to a corner of the room where four boys were seated. One actually had his head buried in a textbook. Two were playing some type of game they must have invented that included what looked like a snitch made from parchment. The last boy was watching the game with glee.

Rosalin's voice had a dreamy quality when she responded. "I think Sirius looks rather dapper today. But James is wearing his Quidditch robes for the match later and he looks soooo good in that color."

Lily rolled her eyes and held back what would have been a very unfeminine snort.

As though Rosalin could sense Lily's attitude, she turned a frown on the girl. "You know, you're the weird one for not liking men."

"They're not men, they're boys," Lily replied coolly, opening her textbook once more.

****James****

"Can't one of you just ask her out?" Remus asked aloud without looking up from his homework.

"Pardon?" James asked, not looking up from his adaption of paper American football.

"Rosalin. She's staring again. I know you guys are used to ogling but it's very distracting when you're trying to get work done."

James knew exactly where Rosalin was located, and coincidentally who she was located next to, but Sirius raised his head and gazed around. His dark eyes quickly fell on the girl and his gaze rested there merely a moment before he returned his attention to the game.

"No," Sirius answered.

"Agreed," James nodded.

Remus finally looked up, a curious frown settled on his face. "Why not?"

Before either boy could open their mouths, Remus corrected himself. "I mean, I know James won't because he's in love with Lily, but why not you, Sirius?"

James' face paled and flushed at the same time. He attempted to sputter out a denial, but he was completely ignored by his

companions. Sirius spoke over his incoherent babble.

"I fly solo," the dark-haired boy said simply. "No strings need be attached to this stallion."

Remus rolled his eyes but said nothing and returned his attention to his book. As Peter began to inquire of Sirius about being single for the rest of his life, James snuck a peek over at the girl sitting beside Rosalin.

Lily Evans was curled in a plushy, red armchair, fully immersed in the book resting on her lap. Her left hand was absently playing with locks of her red auburn hair. It was a habit that he had noticed that he didn't think the girl was even aware of.

James returned his gaze back to his friends before they could notice his distracted focus and tease him mercilessly. He wasn't sure how his friends had picked up on his blooming feelings for Lily when he himself tried desperately to ignore them. But even Peter had seemed unfazed with Remus' comment and he wondered, if he was _that_ _obvious, if Lily knew too. If she did, she showed no interest in reciprocating his feelings and that left a sour feeling in James' gut.

Why wouldn't Lily like him? He was popular and wealthy and a star chaser on the Quidditch team. All the other girls seemed to like him. But Lily paid him no mind. What was worse was her close friendship with Severus Snape. Could it be that Lily fancied him? He was very clearly infatuated with her. But what could that greasy Slytherin possess that James didn't? He was infinitely better than Snivellus in every way. That bloody idiot couldn't even see a hex coming even if James were to warn him first-

"James!"

James was so startled at the sound of his name, having been so immersed in his own thoughts, that his body jerked and his knee hit the underside of the table he was seated at.

"Smitten," Sirius shook his head in dismay, very aware where James' mind had been.

James' face flushed with embarrassment but he was saved a response when Remus cut in.

"You should be leaving for the fields," the boy said, pointing to a clock on the far wall, still without glancing up from his book.

James' hazel eyes wandered to the clock and saw that he was indeed about to be late. He quickly got to his feet and stole another glance at the girl who was even managing to distract him from what he adored most in this world. The girl didn't even seem aware of his existence. Promising himself that he would forget about Lily Evans and purge himself of his stupid crush, James hurried out of the common room with just one more peek at the girl with auburn hair.

****End of Term- Year Five****

****Dungeon Corridor****

****Lily****

His lips were surprisingly soft. Not that Lily had ever ever imagined what his lips would be like. Perhaps it was in such contrast to the way he had pushed her up against the brick wall that the gentleness surprised her.

Lily felt like she should close her eyes; but she couldn't-wouldn't. After all, this was in no way a romantic moment. Not to mention, the possible severity of the situation made the red head fear putting down her guard to make the moment seem authentic.

"Potter," a voice growled. "What are you doing down here?"

James' lips left Lily's so he could turn to face the accusing voice's owner. Over James' shoulder Lily could see Mulciber glaring daggers at James. And beside him, her former friend Severus was looking devastated. His face was slack and pale, but his dark eyes were tormented as they bore into Lily's. Lily felt her heart constrict at the sight of him, the memory of his glaring eyes and harsh words from just days ago was still fresh and raw.

"Oh, Mulciber. Snivellus. Well, I was having a privet moment but it seems you two lack the social grace to let that continue being private," James said airily.

Mulciber's skeptical expression found Lily, who was still against the wall feeling breathless. Although she liked to believe it was from Mulciber's disbelieving stare and not the kiss she had just stared with her least favorite Gryffindor.

Lily knew what she needed to do, and it made her cringe on the inside. But on the outside, Lily forced a nervous smile. She even tried to her best to blush.

"Come on, James," Lily attempted to purr, taking the boy's hand. "Let's go find a new private place."

To Potter's acting credit, he didn't complete blanch at Lily's words. Instead, he grinned, enjoying this much more than Lily would have liked. Holding tightly onto her hand, James led Lily past the two Slytherins.

Lily didn't want to look. She told herself not to, but habit took over. Lily lifted her gaze to Severus just as she passed. His face and eyes had gone completely blank. Lily lowered her gaze and let James lead her out of the snake pit.

****James****

As James led Lily out of the dampness of the dungeons, his mind was focused on the irony of the situation. He had finally kissed the girl of his dreams. He could still taste her lip balm on his lips. But it wasn't in any way how he had ever imagined it.

When James had fantasized about finally kissing Lily Evans, there was usually starlight involved. And a gentle breeze that gently swirled her hair around her shoulders. And he was always smiling in his visions.

But James wasn't smiling now. How could he? Lily had idiotically put herself in grave danger. Snivellus may be an idiot but he could see in Mulciber's beady calculating eyes that he hadn't believe James' lie. He knew Lily had overheard. And now James had to protect her whether Lily liked allowed it or not.

When the pair reached the Gryffindor common room, it was deserted and the fire was dwindling to embers.

"Well...goodnight," Lily said curtly.

James watched as Lily ascended the stairs to the girls' dormitories. He hadn't expected a thank you, but James had essentially saved Lily's life, or prolonged it at the very least. And yet, Lily's aloofness seemed to prove that no matter what James Potter did, he would never be good enough for Lily Evans.

****Spring- Year One****

****Potions Classroom****

****Lily****

Snickering erupted from the table behind Lily as yet another sliced potion ingredient was chucked at the back of Severus' head. Lily enjoyed having potions with the Slytherins because it meant having class with her best friend. But no matter where Lily and Severus sat, Severus was always subjected to abuse from James Potter and Sirius Black. And while Lily would revel in telling off the increasingly popular duo, Severus would rather not oblige the boys. But Lily's blood was beginning to boil.

"Why do you put up with this?" Lily harshly whispered to Severus who sat beside her.

"Because a reaction would encourage them," Severus said, never lifting his eyes from the parchment he took notes on. Just then, a poorly chopped piece of ginger hit Severus in the back of the head.

As soon as Professor Slughorn's back was turn, Lily twisted to glare fiercely at the immature boys behind her. "Do you have nothing better to do? Maybe if you paid attention, your peanut-sized brains might actually grow to start filling your over-sized heads."

"Over-sized?" James turned cluelessly to his best friend. "I was always told my head was of normal proportions?"

"Perhaps dear Lily needs glasses?" Sirius suggested. "Lily, how many fingers am I holding up?"

Lily scoffed and turned back to the front. She could hear Sirius snicker behind her.

"I don't know why you try," Severus murmured, copying the new set of instructions on the blackboard. "They're idiots. They'll never change."

"Everyone can change," Lily insisted with a strangely strong

conviction.

Finally, Severus lifted his gaze to Lily. "Your trust is deeply misplaced."

Lily frowned. Maybe he was right.

****Fall- Year Three****

****Gryffindor Common room****

****Lily****

Rosalin slammed her book closed in finality, even though she'd only completed one page of the reading assignment.

"Well, we should probably head down to the field," the girl said, getting to her feet and stretching.

Lily merely glanced up from her book.

Rosalin rolled her eyes. "Oh come on. You're not there to support Potter; you're there to support Gryffindor."

Lily scoffed, annoyed that Rosalin would even make the assumption that Potter had anything to do with her hesitation. In truth, she wasn't much of a Quidditch fan. As in, she'd rather stay and finish the assignment due in Charms tomorrow. And especially today that Gryffindor was facing Slytherin.

The way Lily saw it, Quidditch should be a friendly game to strengthen friendship among houses. But Severus, he put so much emphasis on House. Often times, he judged the entire character of a person based on which colors they wore on their robes. And chances were, if Slytherin lost today, and they probably would, Severus would be in a grumpy mood tomorrow.

Lily sighed and got to her feet. Rosalin was right, she should support her team. Because while Lily thought a person couldn't be completely judged by the House there were in, Lily was extremely proud to be in Gryffindor. And while she would never put down another House, Lily was glad she hadn't been placed in Slytherin three years ago.

"Wait here," Lily told her friend. "I'll go get my coat."

* * *

><p>I do not own the rights to Harry Potter or JK Rowling's original characters. The experts from the book Lily was reading came straight from Magical Beasts and Where to Find Them.

Most important for readers of this fic: I cannot say how often this fic will be updated. This fic is my attempt to keep major writer's block at bay. So if you're looking for a fic that is regularly updated, this may not be the fic for you.

So why, you may be asking, another Lily and James fic? While there are many excellent LilyXJames fics out there, I find that many to do not represent the pair the way I personally would like to see them. I

find quite a few fics that make Lily seem extremely prudish and nothing but a rule-loving, angsty teenager. I wanted to show how I see Lily and shed light as to why she was sorted into Gryffindor.

I do not normally write cannon fics per say. I tend to lean more towards OC fics. But since there is so much missing about the two in the original books, I thought Lily and James might still be up my alley, so I hope you will all agree.

Also, I would just like to mention that this story does not have a chronological order to it. The rest of the story will continue in this type of pattern. I realize this may not appeal to everyone so if you do not continue reading, I will not be offended. I've never written anything in this type of pattern before so this is kind of a test drive. I hope I can pull it off.

Now, readers of my other fics: you may be wondering why I've started another fic while many of my others remain untouched. Well, one, my laptop is busted and all my stories happen to be saved there. So until those can be extracted from that hard drive, those fics are officially on hiatus. Second, it has been a rough year in my personal life that has included marriage, several big moves and a newborn daughter. I was without a computer for at least half of the past year so anything I could write, had to be done in a notebook. So my apologies about leaving you all hanging.

Thank you all for reading and I hope you enjoy. Feel free to write some comments before moving on. Be a little gentle on criticism, please. I have to admit, I'm not always the greatest about constructive criticism. It's a fault of mine.

End
file.